

Ozark Highlands

From the air, much of the present day Ozark landscape appears forested. Trees, however, don't necessarily add up to forests. The Ozark landscape is a complicated association of forests, woodlands, savannas, glades, cliffs, caves, springs, rivers, streams, sinkhole ponds and fens. This diverse landscape is home to a variety of plants and animals.

Though the Ozark Highlands appear mountainous, this landscape is really a broad plateau that has endured years of erosion. The result is a thoroughly dissected plateau that has allowed plenty of time for plants and animals to adapt and change. Over 200 endemic species are present. Most Ozark streams are spring-fed and carry few suspended materials like silt or clay. Water moves underground easily and can surface again as springs, fens, or at the mouths of caves.

The Ozark Highlands offer many opportunities to conserve wildlife and their habitats.



Photos: Greer Spring and Eastern Collared Lizard, Jim Rathert, Missouri Department of Conservation

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Animal Targets of the Ozark Highlands

Forest

Ringed Salamander • Long-tailed Salamander • Dark-sided Salamander • Four-toed Salamander • Ozark Zigzag Salamander • Wood Frog • Yellow-billed Cuckoo • Pileated Woodpecker • Acadian Flycatcher • Carolina Chickadee • Wood Thrush • Prothonotary Warbler • Ovenbird • Louisiana Waterthrush • Cerulean Warbler • Yellow-throated Warbler • Worm-eating Warbler • Kentucky Warbler • Swainson's Warbler • Purple Finch • Golden Mouse • Swamp Rabbit

Woodland

Ozark Swallowtail • Buck Moth • Three-toed Box Turtle • Northern Scarlet Snake • Northern Fence Lizard • Chuck-will's-widow • Whip-poor-will • Great Crested Flycatcher • Summer Tanager • Pine Warbler • Orchard Oriole • Plains Spotted Skunk

Savanna

Eastern Tiger Salamander • Broad-headed Skink • Northern Bobwhite • Brown Thrasher • Blue-winged Warbler • Prairie Warbler • Field Sparrow • Bachman's Sparrow

Prairie

Regal Fritillary • Prairie Mole Cricket • Grassland Crayfish • Northern Crawfish Frog • Great Plains Skink • Ornate Box Turtle • Lined Snake • Bullsnake • Swainson's Hawk • Greater Prairie-chicken • Upland Sandpiper • Scissor-tailed Flycatcher • Loggerhead Shrike • Bell's Vireo • Henslow's Sparrow • Grasshopper Sparrow • Dickcissel • Eastern Meadowlark • Prairie Vole • Hispid Cotton Rat

Glade/Cliff

Eastern Collared Lizard • Greater Roadrunner • Painted Bunting

Wetland

Hine's Emerald Dragonfly • Gray Petaltail • Saline Spring Tiger Beetle • Great Plains Toad • Plains Spadefoot • Yellow Mud Turtle • Least Bittern • American Bittern • Black-crowned Night Heron • Little Blue Heron • Sora • King Rail • Virginia Rail • Marsh Wren • Rusty Blackbird

Cave

Pink Planarian • Enigmatic Cavesnail • Tumbling Creek Cavesnail • Hubricht's Long-tailed Amphipod • Onondaga Cave Amphipod • Ozark Cave Amphipod • Salem Cave Crayfish • Bristly Cave Crayfish • Caney Mountain Cave Crayfish • Ozark Cavefish • Southern Cavefish • Grotto Sculpin • Cave Salamander • Grotto Salamander • Gray Bat • Eastern Small-footed Myotis • Northern Myotis • Indiana Bat

River and Stream

Chert Pebblesnail • Black Sandshell • Curtis's Pearlymussel • Neosho Mucket • Pink Mucket • Rabbitsfoot • Salamander Mussel • Scaleshell • Sheepnose • Snuffbox • Spectaclecase • Western Fanshell • Freshwater Shrimp • Belted Crayfish • Big Creek Crayfish • Coldwater Crayfish • Long-pincered Crayfish • Mammoth Spring Crayfish • Meek's Crayfish • St. Francis River Crayfish • Williams's Crayfish • A Heptageniid Mayfly • Westfall's Snaketail • Ozark Stonefly • Pygmy Stonefly • Ozark Clubtail • Net Spinning Caddisfly • Ozark Emerald • Gilded River Cruiser • Longhorn Forestfly • Alabama Shad • Arkansas Darter • Arkansas Saddled Darter • Bluestripe Darter • Bluntnose Shiner • Channel Darter • Checkered Madtom • Eastern Slim Minnow • Flathead Chub • Least Darter • Longnose Darter • Neosho Madtom • Niangua Darter • Ozark Chub • Ozark Shiner • Paddlefish • Pallid Sturgeon • Plains Minnow • Plains Topminnow • Sicklefin Chub • Southern Brook Lamprey • Stargazing Darter • Sturgeon Chub • Topeka Shiner • Western Slim Minnow • Yoke Darter • Eastern Hellbender • Ozark Hellbender • Midland Smooth Softshell



Bleeding Shiner



Ringed Salamander